

Message Text

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13

ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 IO-13 COA-02 EB-11 OIC-04 TRSE-00

ACDA-19 AEC-11 AGR-20 CG-00 COME-00 DOTE-00 SCEM-02

FMC-04 INT-08 JUSE-00 NSF-04 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01

SS-15 USIA-12 SCI-06 CEQ-02 RSR-01 /184 W

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R 150545 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1095

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 3 292

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, AS

SUBJ: LOS: SOME ADDITIONAL LIGHT SHOWN ON GOA'S VIEW
OF ARCHIPELAGO PROBLEM

REF: A) CANBERRA 3046 B) STATE 103722 C) CANBERRA 2694

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: CONVERSATION WITH DFA MEMBER OF LOS
DELEGATION GILCHRIST INDICATES GOA CONCERN OVER REACHING
ACCOMMODATION IN LOS MEETINGS ON PASSAGE THROUGH ARCHI-
PELAGOS WHICH WOULD PROTECT AUSTRALIA'S RIGHT TO USE
DEEP WATER CHANNEL IN TORRES STRAITS. GILCHRIST ALSO
NOTED GOA COULD NOT ACCEPT MEDIAN LINE IF DRAWN PRE-
CISELY BETWEEN QUEENSLAND AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA COAST-
LINES. END SUMMARY

2. IN TALK WITH EMBOFF ON JUNE 14, GILCHRIST, ASSISTANT SECRETARY,
LEGAL DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
INDICATED GOA CONCERN WITH APPLICATION OF ARCHI-
PELAGO THEORY TO TORRES STRAITS ISLANDS. OCCASION FOR
HIS REMARK WAS GENERAL DISCUSSION OF PROBLEMS OF SETTLING
BORDER BETWEEN TORRES STRAITS ISLANDS AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA.
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GILCHRIST SAID THAT IN NO CASE WOULD AUSTRALIA GIVE UP ITS RIGHT FOR " FREE PASSAGE" THROUGH TORRES STRAITS' DEEP CHANNEL. HE ALSO SAID THAT MEDIAN LINE WHICH WOULD DIVIDE SEA AREA BETWEEN COASTLINES OF PAPUS AND AUSTRALIA IN TWO WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTABLE TO GOA. GILCHRIST STATED AUSTRALIA WOULD NOT BE WILLING TO WITHDRAW ALL THE WAY TO ITS OWN COASTLINE IN MAKING DETERMINATION OF MEDIAN LINE.

3. WHEN QUESTIONED ABOUT USE OF THE PHRASE " FREE PASSAGE" AND WHETHER HE MEANT TO SAY " FREE TRANSIT", GILCHRIST ACKNOWLEDGED HE HAD DELIBERATELY USED " FREE PASSAGE" SO AS NOT TO IMPLY ANY AUSTRALIAN POSITION WITH REGARD TO EITHER FREE TRANSIT OR INNOCENT PASSAGE. EMBOFF MENTIONED RECENT STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM AT APIA (REF A) WITH REGARD TO PASSAGE OF SUBMERGED SUBMARINES THROUGH STRAITS. GILCHRIST DID NOT RESPOND NOR ATTEMPT TO INTERPRET MEANING OF PRIME MINISTER' S STATEMENT.

4. IN COURSE OF CONVERSATION GILCHRIST SAID HE WOULD BE ATTENDING LOS MEETING IN GENEVA IN EARLY JULY, ALONG WITH JOHN BAILEY, LOS EXPERT IN DFA. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH BAILEY, BAILEY STATED HE WAS LEAVING JUNE 15 TO ATTEND LOS ACADEMIC MEETING IN KINGSTON, RHODE ISLAND AND WOULD BE AWAY FOR ABOUT 10 DAYS.

5. EMBOFF INQUIRED WHETHER GILCHRIST ABLE TO PROVIDE SOME INFORMATION ON GOA ATTITUDES ON LOS MATTERS BEFORE GENEVA MEETING. GILCHRIST RESPONDED THAT TWO INTER- DEPARTMENTAL MEETINGS HAD BEEN HELD IN PAST MONTH AND THAT ANOTHER WAS SCHEDULED AS SOON AS ABILEY RETURNED FROM U. S. HE IMPLIED THAT DFA MIGHT AT THAT STAGE BE ABLE TO PROVIDE EMBASSY WITH SOME INFORMATION.

6. COMMENT: GILCHRIST' S HEDGING ON MATTER OF TRANSIT THROUGH ARCHIPELAGOS APPEARS TO INDICATE GOA HAS NOT YET REACHED DEFINITIVE POSITION ON THIS MATTER. SUGGESTION THAT GOA WOULD NOT ACCEPT MEDIAN LINE DRAWN HALF- WAY BETWEEN QUEENSLAND AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA ALSO IMPLIES SOME CONCERN OVER RESULTS OF NEGOTIATIONS TO
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DEFINE BORDER IN THIS AREA. MENTION OF TORRES STRAIT- PNG BORDER PROBLEMIS OCCURRED IN CONTEXT OF DISCUSSION WITH GILCHRIST CENTERING UPON CURRENT VISIT OF TORRES ISLAND DELEGATION TO CANBERRA, WHICH IS BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY BY AIRGRAM.
GREEN

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 JUN 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973CANBER00003
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: CANBERRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730620/aaaajblc.tel
Line Count: 119
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION L
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 CANBERRA 3046, 73 STATE 103722, 73 CANBERRA 2694
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 OCT 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29-Oct-2001 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <12-Dec-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 980209
Subject: LOS: SOME ADDITIONAL LIGHT SHOWN ON GOA' S VIEW OF ARCHIPELAGO PROBLEM
TAGS: PBOR, AS, PBOR
To: L
SECSTATE WASHDC
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005